

## THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME LESPEDEZA

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IN the year 1803, a work was published on the flora of North America as a result of the explorations in this country of André Michaux and his son François André-Michaux between 1785 and 1796.

In this work<sup>1</sup> was described a new genus of legume which was named *Lespedeza* and in a footnote it is given as named for "D. LESPEDEZ, gubernator Floridae, erga me peregrinatorem officiosissimus," which may be translated as named for "D. LESPEDEZ, Governor of Florida, on account of the greatest courtesy to me during my travels." This has been interpreted by later writers as protection furnished by the Governor, but Michaux's Journal apparently disproves this. There were no local conflicts with the Indians at that time and, according to the Journal, all of his trips were by boat with frequent landings and accompanied by his son, a negro purchased at Charleston, and two hired boatmen who were also armed with guns, which are mentioned on only one occasion when a salute was exchanged on approaching a settlement. The courtesies extended, as far as mentioned, were entirely social, beginning with an invitation to dine with the Governor and ladies soon after his arrival.

In connection with a study of the economic species of *Lespedeza* with Dr. A. J. Pieters of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, it seemed desirable to have a little more information regarding D. Lespedez and his relations with the elder Michaux. The Journal of the latter<sup>2</sup> indicates that he arrived at St. Augustine February 28, 1788, explored the immediate region to a distance of 50 to 100 miles radius, and left there May 27, 1788. In several places he refers to visits to or from "His Excellency the Governor," but in no place mentions him by name. The Governor took a great interest in his collections on the return from several trips, and visited him to see his material on at least one occasion.

It would seem probable that some of the early histories of Florida or of the Spanish possessions in this country would make some mention of the name of the Governor of Florida during that period, but a search of those available at the Library of Congress failed to reveal any

<sup>1</sup> Michaux, André. *Flora Boreali-Americana*, 2: 70. 1803.

<sup>2</sup> Published in the original French by C. S. Sargent, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 26: 1-145. 1889.